

Native American Tribes Whose Members Served as Code Talkers Honored with Congressional Gold Medals

November 20, 2013

WASHINGTON — Twenty-five Native American tribes received Congressional Gold Medals today in recognition of the dedication and valor of the code talkers and their service to the United States Armed Forces during World War I and World War II. Eight additional Native American tribes also were honored during the ceremony, held in Emancipation Hall in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, and will receive medals at a later date. Following the ceremony, a reception held at the National Museum of the American Indian included an appearance by Edmond Harjo (Seminole Nation – Oklahoma), one of the last surviving code talkers.

The term “code talkers” refers to those Native Americans who used their tribal languages as a means of secret communication during wartime. The U.S. Department of Defense has so far identified 33 Native American Tribes from 11 states that are eligible to receive a gold medal with a unique design. The United States Mint prepared and struck all medals as authorized by the Code Talkers Recognition Act of 2008 (Act) (Public Law 110–420). Information about the eligible tribes, descriptions of each medal, and images are available the United States Mint’s web site at </learn/coin-and-medal-programs/medals/native-american-code-talkers>.

The Act also authorizes the United States Mint to strike the silver duplicate medals that will be awarded to the code talkers, or their family member or personal representative. In addition, it authorizes the bureau to make available for sale to the public three-inch and 1½-inch bronze replicas of each medal. These medals can be purchased at the bureau’s online catalog, <http://www.usmint.gov/catalog>, starting at noon Eastern Time today. The medals also can be purchased by calling 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468). Hearing- and speech-impaired customers with TTY equipment may call 1-888-321-MINT (6468). The three-inch medals are priced at \$39.95 each, and the 1½-inch medals are priced at \$6.95 each.

The United States Mint was created by Congress in 1792 and became part of the Department of the Treasury in 1873. It is the Nation’s sole manufacturer of legal tender coinage and is responsible for producing circulating coinage for the Nation to conduct its trade and commerce. The United States Mint also produces numismatic products, including proof, uncirculated, and commemorative coins; Congressional Gold Medals; and silver and gold bullion coins. The United States Mint’s numismatic programs are self-sustaining and operate at no cost to the taxpayer.

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